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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
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Summary record of the 1577th meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 22 February 2018, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Leinarte

Contents

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Eighth periodic report of the Republic of Korea (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Eighth periodic report of the Republic of Korea (*continued*) (CEDAW/C/KOR/8 and CEDAW/C/KOR/8/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of the Republic of Korea took places at the Committee table.*

Articles 10 to 14

2. **Ms. Hayashi** said that, unfortunately, the Republic of Korea and her own country, Japan, regularly vied for the worst rating on the annual ranking carried out by the World Economic Forum (WEF) of gender gap indicators among the Group of 20 countries. Both Japan and the Republic of Korea ranked very low, even on worldwide gender equity ratings. While they had high literacy rates and placed a great deal of priority on education, their efforts to ensure gender equity ran up against social and cultural obstacles and a tradition of male dominance. The periodic report mentioned various steps taken to enhance the status of women in the country, but outcomes had been insufficient. Was the Government considering the implementation of more aggressive temporary special measures, such as quotas for educational programmes or targeted financial assistance for female students studying in non-traditional areas? While the delegation had mentioned some affirmative action programmes, the Committee would appreciate it if it could present time frames for achieving specific objectives.

3. The State party had developed guidelines to assist teachers in combating gender stereotyping in class content and curricula. It would be useful to the Committee to find out if any assessment had been carried out of the implementation of the guidelines and to hear about specific feedback from teachers. She would appreciate it if the delegation could report on any visible changes resulting from the use of such tools. At the postgraduate level, while the university entrance rate for women had surpassed that of men, a report from WEF had identified a substantial gender gap in tertiary education. The delegation was thus invited to provide statistics on the gender breakdown of students at levels above the first university degree.

4. Gender equality and sex education had not been formally integrated into the regular school curricula, despite the adoption in 2013 of legal provisions in that sense. The current sex education programme evidently dealt only with women's sexual and reproductive health, and only in very limited terms. Sexual and reproductive health rights had been interpreted in a narrow sense, relating only to pregnancy, childbirth and maternal health. A national standard for sex education, introduced by the Ministry of Education in 2015, reportedly only strengthened prejudice and gender stereotypes that were prejudicial to women and sexual minorities. What measures did the State party intend to take to enhance the quality of sex education in schools?

5. **Mr. Bergby** said that the gender wage gap, which had been the highest among the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for some 15 years, was a source of concern. Women's careers were often adversely affected by breaks for childbirth and child-rearing. Some 40 per cent of women workers were engaged in low-wage, irregular employment, with little job security. Women workers were often excluded from social benefits such as social security, employment insurance, maternity leave and childcare leave. The Government reportedly intended to adopt a strategic plan for the conversion of precarious forms of employment to a more regular status. Had any activities been carried out and, if so, with what results? The Committee had received information according to which some 70 per cent of workers who were employed less than 15 hours per week were women. Owing to their status, they were excluded from social security insurance and labour law protection. Were there any plans to revise the labour law to extend coverage to such workers? He had also heard that the Government intended to distribute standard wage level guidelines for major job categories in the public sector so as to promote the spirit of equal pay for work of equal value. The Committee would like to

know the status of that initiative and to find out whether it would include a comparison of remuneration levels for jobs typically occupied respectively by men and women. Was the Government considering expanding the guidelines to cover the private sector? Noting that the guidelines were merely advisory, he asked whether there was any intention to make them mandatory in the public sector.

6. According to the information provided by the State party, the sixth framework plan for equal employment would include measures to bridge the wage gap. He invited the delegation to provide more specific information on such measures and on their expected outcomes. According to the periodic report, employees who considered that they had been victims of violations of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value were able to file petitions with the Ministry of Employment and Labour, which investigated such cases and could require their companies to take corrective action. The State party reported that in 2016 the Ministry had examined just 10 cases. The Committee would be interested to find out how many cases had initially been brought to its attention. Had the Government referred cases for legal proceedings when companies refused to take remedial action, and, if so, were resources available, including legal aid, to ensure that victims had access to justice?

7. The Committee had received reports of high levels of discrimination against women workers. In certain companies, female workers were employed in separate job categories from male workers performing the same tasks and received less remuneration. There had also been reports that large national companies had intentionally eliminated women applicants during their recruitment procedures. Were the regulations in the Equal Employment Act sufficient to prevent such direct discrimination? Did victims of discrimination have access to justice, and was free legal aid available to them?

8. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family had reported that the number of companies and organizations inspected for alleged discriminatory employment practices had fallen from 920 in 2013 to just over 500 in 2016. Was there a reason for the substantial reduction in the number of inspections? The Government had, in the information submitted to the Committee, cited career interruption related to childbirth and childcare as a major reason for the gender pay gap, and it had stated that time flexibility in employment had thus been promoted to support a work-family balance. In a survey, women who had interrupted their careers had cited low wages, long working hours and termination of contracts as factors that convinced them to stop working. The introduction of re-employment centres for the reintegration into the labour market of women who had left the workforce was a positive development, but such steps should not be used to maintain a system based on career interruptions. It would be preferable to prevent career interruptions altogether. What steps were planned in that sense?

9. Sexual harassment impacted heavily on the employment and promotion opportunities of women. The Committee had received reports that half of female workers had experienced some form of sexual harassment in the workplace, and 40 per cent of respondents said that they would not report harassment out of fear of adverse consequences. The Ministry of Employment and Labour had received over 2,100 reports of sexual harassment between 2012 and 2016 and had sent all cases to the prosecution authority, yet only nine cases had been prosecuted. Why was there such a large discrepancy? The Government intended to make it mandatory for employers with more than a certain number of employees to establish procedures to prevent and remedy sexual harassment. Was there a time frame for adopting that measure? How many employees must an employer have for it to be subject to that rule?

10. **Ms. Hofmeister** said that the fertility rate in the State party was perhaps the lowest in the world, and, despite the Government's past efforts, there was still clearly a serious shortage of births. The fact that abortion was still criminalized in the State party placed an immense burden on women, who had to assume full responsibility for sexual reproduction. Legalizing abortion in the event of rape, incest, threats to the life or health of the pregnant woman or serious fetal impairment would help the situation, and the Committee had long ago recommended the decriminalization of all other cases of abortion as well. What obstacles kept the State party from acting on those recommendations? What prevented the State from improving the living and working conditions of young parents? The Committee

would like to receive information about cross-border abortions and data on the mortality rate resulting from unsafe abortion.

11. The Committee was in the process of preparing a general recommendation on gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction in the context of climate change. The State party's reliance on coal-fired power plants would clearly produce air pollution and increase mortality rates, and not only in the State party; the export of such technology to developing countries would have an extremely negative environmental impact for generations to come, with especially harmful effects on pregnant women and their children. What did the State party intend to do to revise its energy policy for the benefit of such women and children?

12. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the reasons for her country's low ranking on the lists produced annually by WEF were mainly the wage gap and the lack of women in high-ranking positions. The new Government was focusing on enhancing the proportion of women in senior-level posts, and she was confident that changes would occur before the consideration of the next periodic report. Eliminating the wage gap was a challenging task that would require addressing the situation of staff at private companies. The fact that the number of female students entering university had surpassed the number of men had unfortunately not yet had an impact on society. Sex education was provided by health teachers, and the authorities were making efforts to incorporate the gender perspective in school programmes.

13. **Ms. Kim** Jieun (Republic of Korea) said that the gender wage gap, though still much larger than in other countries, had decreased from nearly 40 per cent to about 35 per cent in 2016. Women were engaged in jobs that were of low quality owing in large part to career interruptions for childbirth and child-rearing. The Government was continuing to monitor wage discrimination and planned to institute a corporate salary disclosure system that would make differences in pay more transparent. To prevent the interruption of women's careers and promote a healthy work-life balance, there were plans to increase childcare support and to provide for flexible working times and assistance for women wishing to return to the workforce after a hiatus. The number of posts subject to affirmative action would also increase, in order to increase the number of women in high-ranking positions. A wage practice guideline and a manual on the principle of equal pay for work of equal value had recently been drawn up.

14. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the Government was currently considering plans to expand affirmative action so that it would extend to small enterprises with fewer than five employees.

15. **Mr. Lee** Kyusung (Republic of Korea) said that in 2015 the school curriculum had been changed to incorporate gender equality as a principle to be taught in social studies, ethics classes and other relevant subjects. The 2015 curriculum was already being applied to about one third of classes at the primary and secondary levels and would be applicable to all classes by 2020. New textbooks would be introduced in order to remove gender-based stereotypes, and, in future, textbook monitoring groups would keep track of any possible gender discrimination and would be able to recommend improvements. Teachers were given gender equality training as part of their continuous learning programme.

16. The primary and secondary curricula, and also various laws, called for the provision of sex education at schools in order to inculcate sound values and attitudes about sexuality among students and establish their sense of responsibility. The national sex education curriculum had been drawn up on the basis of consultation with various groups and experts and provided age-appropriate instruction. At least 15 hours of sex education must be provided to students annually through health, social studies and other relevant classes.

17. In 2017, some 250,000 students had been enrolled in post-graduate university programmes, including 130,000 women, with 30,000 of them taking doctorate-level courses.

18. The Ministry of Education understood the need to assist students from underprivileged rural areas who wished to attend university. A special university admissions system had been established in 1996 to provide them with such opportunities. Such students also benefited from financial aid, including scholarships and low-interest

student loans. In granting such aid, the authorities would ensure fairness and equality in applying the selection criteria to make sure that there would be no gender discrimination.

19. Teacher training institutions incorporated gender equality themes into their general programmes and curricula, and teachers who required specialized knowledge, for example those who would teach gender equality, were given specific gender-focused skill enhancement and work training.

20. **Ms. Kim** Jieun (Republic of Korea) said that the employment and labour authorities had adopted a five-year policy aimed at preventing the use of non-regular employment and ensuring that workplaces were free from discrimination. The policy advocated the principle of hiring regular workers on permanent, continuous contracts when they were involved in work directly related to the preservation of life or maintenance of safety. It also called for a realignment of the system dealing with discrimination with a view to preventing the abuse of non-regular employment and improving labour market structures.

21. For female workers without regular contracts, the policy was aimed at ensuring the right to take maternity benefits and childcare leave by streamlining application procedures. A revision of the Employment Insurance Act was currently under way to ensure that female workers on fixed-term contracts would continue to receive full maternity benefits even if their contracts lapsed during the period of maternity leave. The Government had in July 2017 adopted guidelines for the conversion of non-regular contracts into regular contracts in the public sector. There were some 2.7 million public sector workers, nearly 20 per cent of whom did not have regular contracts. The measure in question would gradually grant such workers regular employment contracts over the next few years.

22. The reason for the low rate of prosecution of sexual harassment cases was that those accused of harassment, such as employers, were subject to criminal prosecution only if it could be proven that their actions caused harm to the victim or employee. Most cases did not meet that criterion and were resolved with the payment of a fine.

23. **Ms. Kim** Jieun (Republic of Korea) said that, in accordance with the Equal Employment Opportunity and Work-Family Balance Assistance Act, workplaces were required to provide training on the prevention of sexual harassment at least once a year. As workplaces devised their own training programmes, the Government did not have statistics on the content or frequency of such programmes. Companies were required to display printed materials related to the training programmes in a location where employees could freely read them. Any company that failed to provide training would be fined and subjected to corrective actions.

24. **Ms. Choi** Hye-min (Republic of Korea) said that a family-friendly certification scheme had been established to encourage companies to develop their own systems for improving the work-life balance of their employees. The scheme placed particular emphasis on small and medium-sized enterprises and would be further expanded to increase support for such companies. As policies based on the assumption that women's careers would be interrupted were too narrow, the Government intended to eliminate structural gender discrimination in the labour market to prevent women's careers from being interrupted in the first place.

25. **Ms. Seo** Eun Hee (Republic of Korea) said that efforts were being made to create a family-friendly working environment in the public sector. The bill for the amendment of legislation on public officials contained provisions that would enable women to reduce their working day by two hours. Childcare leave for spouses had been extended from 5 to 10 days and additional childcare leave could be taken by spouses with children under the age of 5. The grounds on which childcare leave could be taken by employees had been extended to include hospital visits, and employees with more than three children could obtain up to three days' leave in certain situations.

26. **Mr. Lim** Hee Ju (Republic of Korea) said that the Government was making efforts to compile information on the factors behind the low fertility rate. In accordance with the national policy drawn up to tackle the issue, child subsidies would be introduced and the number of State-run childcare centres would be increased. The committee responsible for addressing population decline had been restructured and strengthened.

27. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the problem of the low fertility rate would never be resolved unless women had access to high-quality employment, which would be possible only when a culture of gender equality had been established.

28. **Ms. Choi** Hye-min (Republic of Korea) said that it was necessary to create an environment in which women could give birth rather than having an abortion. In 2018, a fact-finding survey on abortion would be carried out to shed light on the current situation. State-run education programmes on contraception would be delivered to adolescents and pilot counselling programmes at specialized institutions would be established. The Constitutional Court was currently reviewing a complaint related to the decriminalization of abortion.

29. **Ms. Park** Eun Young (Republic of Korea) said that women who had been unfairly treated in the workplace could make use of the complaints mechanism provided by the Ministry of Employment and Labour free of charge. Korean and foreign women who were experiencing financial difficulties could apply for the free legal counselling made available by the Ministry of Justice. When certain requirements were met, women could be provided with a lawyer to represent them in court. A project to provide free legal aid to victims of domestic violence and single-parent families was in operation and a State-run system to provide counsel for victims of sexual violence and child abuse had been established. Recipients of basic income support and persons with disabilities were also provided with free legal counselling. Plans were in place to provide legal counselling to persons living in remote areas who had no direct access to a lawyer.

30. **Ms. Lee** Yun-a (Republic of Korea) said that measures to prevent sexual harassment had been taken by the Ministry of Employment and Labour and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. Public organizations were required to provide education on sexual harassment to their employees and to appoint counsellors and complaints officers. The implementation of measures to prevent sexual harassment was monitored and follow-up measures were also taken. In order to raise awareness of sexual harassment and protect victims against attempts by organizations to cover up offences, policies on the prevention of sexual harassment in the public sector were currently being strengthened.

31. **Ms. Kim** Jieun (Republic of Korea) said that all persons earning an income, including part-time workers, were required to subscribe to the national pension scheme.

32. **Ms. Manalo** said that the dialogue thus far had not been productive. It would be more helpful if the delegation focused less on statistical data and more on detailing the steps taken by the State party to improve the situation of women in all areas of life.

33. **Ms. Ameline** said that she wished to know what steps were being taken to improve the precarious situation in which some women found themselves given the country's ageing population, increasing levels of social isolation and rising youth unemployment. In particular, it would be interesting to know how many women benefited from the minimum guaranteed income established by the Government. The Committee wished to know whether steps were being taken to make it easier for women, including those in isolated areas, to set up their own businesses and whether training and mentoring was provided to women entrepreneurs. Noting that legislation on the promotion of socially responsible companies had been adopted in 2016, she asked what concrete measures were being taken to promote the establishment of such companies. The Committee would welcome further information on any measures taken to strengthen health-care cooperatives for persons on low incomes.

34. **Ms. Song** Wenyan said that she would appreciate details of government funding for the five-year plans for the development of women working in the agriculture and fishing industries, whether the outcomes of the first plan had been evaluated and, if so, what progress had been achieved by the plan. She asked what percentage of the persons who had benefited from the pension payment support programme in 2014 had been women and what percentage of the women eligible for the programme were actually receiving the benefits available under it.

35. Under the Fisheries Cooperative Act, regional fisheries cooperatives were required to appoint at least one woman director when the proportion of female members reached 30

per cent. Although the percentage of female members of such cooperatives now exceeded that threshold, fewer than 5 per cent of directors were women. In view of that situation, she asked how many directors there were for each cooperative and what measures would be taken to increase the number of women directors. Noting that the same approach had been adopted for the agricultural cooperatives, she wished to know why boards were required to appoint women directors only when the proportion of women members had reached 30 per cent.

36. The Committee would welcome the delegation's comments on the 2015 agreement on sex slavery established by the Governments of the Republic of Korea and Japan and on the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation established by the Government of State party. Given that survivors had expressed strong opposition to both the agreement and the Foundation, she wished to know what approach the Government would now take to those two initiatives.

37. It would be interesting to know what steps would be taken to ensure that lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women could enjoy the rights enshrined in the Convention.

38. Noting that women were disproportionately affected by climate change and the natural disasters caused by it, she asked whether women had been fully consulted about the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies aimed at mitigating that phenomenon. Lastly, she wished to know how many women there were in the government department responsible for dealing with climate change.

39. **Ms. Manalo**, noting that the State party experienced particularly high levels of atmospheric pollution, which adversely affected women's health and the health of unborn children, said that she wished to know what steps would be taken to protect women against the pollution generated by coal-fired power plants. The Committee would be grateful if the delegation's response included a reference to third countries in which the Government sponsored the construction of such plants.

40. **Ms. Choi** Hye-min (Republic of Korea) said that the department responsible for small and medium-sized enterprises served to support women entrepreneurs and promote entrepreneurship among women. A centre had been established to support women starting their own businesses and an expert had been appointed to provide guidance to future entrepreneurs. An entrepreneurship competition had been established to identify promising opportunities and mentors at employment centres had been made available to provide advice to women entrepreneurs. Gender impact analyses would be conducted to analyse the obstacles that prevented women from starting and joining socially responsible companies. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family had established a programme to strengthen support for women entrepreneurs, particularly through online channels.

41. **Ms. Lee** Jeong-yeon (Republic of Korea) said that, under the plans for the development of women working in the agriculture and fishing industries, the support and benefits available to such women had been increased.

42. **Ms. Jeung** Eun (Republic of Korea) said that the second national action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security was being drafted. One of the key concerns of the plan was to train disaster-management officers in measures to ensure safety for women. In 2016, a gender impact analysis of disaster-management policy had been conducted and research had been carried out into the development of safety education manuals for women faced with different types of disaster. The results of that research had been distributed to the relevant organizations.

43. In September 2017, the Government had launched a comprehensive series of measures to combat fine-dust pollution. By 2020, the quantity of such particles produced in Korea was expected to have been cut by 30 per cent. Regions that were particularly affected by fine dust particles would be designated as dust-free zones in order to ensure the health and safety of women and children.

44. **Ms. Lee** Gun-jeong (Republic of Korea) said that although the Republic of Korea had ranked 118 out of 144 countries in the most recent edition of the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, it had come in tenth place in the Gender Inequality

Index of the United Nations Development Programme. To understand where the problems lay, the authorities had calculated their own gender equality index, the results of which were released annually. Index inputs included information on women's participation in society, social attitudes and women's welfare. The index was calculated not only for the country as a whole but also for its administrative divisions. Progress towards gender equality, as measured by the index, had been made. Women's workforce participation rates were still low, however, and wage gaps remained large.

45. **Ms. Choi** Hye-min (Republic of Korea) said that it was against the law in the Republic of Korea to discriminate against anyone on the basis of her or her status as a member of a sexual minority. The National Human Rights Commission of Korea was currently conducting a survey that would shed light on the discrimination faced by the members of such groups. It would make recommendations based on the results of the survey.

46. **Mr. Lim** Hee Ju (Republic of Korea) said that there were clinics that provided health care in the country's rural areas. As some such areas lacked maternity clinics, the Government had provided support for the construction of facilities for childbirth.

Articles 15 and 16

47. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that she wished to know whether divorcing couples were required to participate in the mediation scheme established by the Framework Act on Healthy Families, whether women could opt out of the scheme in the event of domestic violence and, if so, whether opting out would put them at a disadvantage before a judge in divorce court. In the same connection, she wondered whether requiring mediation was not a sign that the aim of the Act was to preserve the family at any cost and whether it afforded sufficient protection to women victims of domestic violence. She also wondered whether divorce or family courts were instructed not to grant fathers parental visitation rights or to grant them the right only to supervised visitation when there was evidence that they had committed acts of domestic violence.

48. The marital property regime in the State party was not in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 21 on equality in marriage and family relations, and, although property accumulated during a marriage was equally divided when a couple divorced, the law clearly stated that in the absence of an agreement between the divorcing spouses, the courts would consider the relative contributions they had made to the household's wealth. In that connection, she wondered whether steps had been taken to prevent one spouse from concealing assets from another and whether assets such as work-related pension rights and increased earning potential were considered joint marital property.

49. In addition, she asked what measures had been taken to ensure that same-sex couples enjoyed the same economic, social and cultural rights as opposite-sex couples and whether the country had any plans to allow gender-neutral civil unions. She would welcome an answer to her earlier question as to whether the members of same-sex couples were protected under the Act on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims.

50. **Mr. Choi** Dong Won (Republic of Korea) said that the purpose of the Act was to restore family harmony and stability and protect the rights of the members of the family, and the victims in particular. The rights of the victims, not the unity of the family, were the primary focus in cases of domestic violence.

51. If divorcing spouses were unable to reach an agreement on the division of property, the courts, as had been suggested, examined the circumstances on a case-by-case basis and determined how joint marital property would be divided. There were no explicit provisions for the equal division of marital property, but if one spouse acquired assets as a result of cooperation with his or her spouse, those assets were considered jointly owned. A spouse's contribution to the management of the household was also recognized.

52. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that same-sex partnerships had not been granted legal recognition. Progress on that and other issues was slow but not inexistent.

53. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that she wished to know how rape was defined in the State party's Criminal Code. In particular, she wondered whether the lack of freely given consent served as the basis for the definition.

54. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that, although responses to domestic violence could in some ways be said to prioritize family unity, the authorities were well aware that families took various forms. Considerable efforts were being made to ensure that women were in a position to be self-reliant. The Government had taken a keen interest in putting in place methods of supporting households led by single mothers, including adolescents. Programmes that enabled adolescent mothers to return to school or receive other forms of training after having given birth would have been unthinkable only a few years earlier. The notion that the Government was intent on protecting the traditional family was misplaced.

55. **Mr. Choi** Dong Won (Republic of Korea) said that rape was defined as a crime that the victim could not prevent.

56. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the current Government's family policies emphasized ways of helping women, adolescent mothers and women from diverse backgrounds in particular, to help themselves. For example, single mothers went to support centres where they were encouraged to deal with the problems they faced by helping other single mothers deal with theirs. In addition, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family encouraged locally driven efforts to provide neighbourhood childcare services. The Ministry had also entered into agreements with developers to ensure that newly built apartment complexes had childcare facilities. The increasing availability of childcare would enable more and more single mothers to enter the labour market.

57. **Ms. Manalo** said that she wished to know what percentage of the country's growth was accounted for by entrepreneurship, what percentage of its entrepreneurs were women and, if male entrepreneurs outnumbered female entrepreneurs, what measures had been taken to improve women's capacity to start their own businesses. The State party's emphasis on social consensus, in particular as it related to women's rights, was troubling. Lastly, she asked whether the delegation could indicate a time frame for the establishment of the Gender Equality Committee and describe what steps were being taken to protect provincial human rights mechanisms from the attacks to which they were reportedly subjected.

58. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that she would appreciate an English translation of the provision of the Criminal Code in which rape was defined.

59. **Ms. Ameline** said that addressing climate change from the perspective of women's rights meant not only ensuring that women were protected from its effects but also involving women in the development of new, more sustainable strategies for growth.

60. **Ms. Song** Wenyan said that she would welcome an answer to her question about the percentage of women directors of cooperatives. The delegation might also address her questions about climate change and so-called comfort women.

61. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that the Government had policies to increase the representation of women — currently at 2.4 per cent — in positions of senior leadership in the public sector. Instituting such policies in the private sector was another matter. Pressure was nonetheless applied. Recognition was given to employers that were deemed friendly to women, for instance, and a number of incentive schemes had been developed.

62. Consultations on the composition and functions of the Gender Equality Committee were ongoing. It would be difficult to forecast a specific time frame for its establishment. She noted the suggestion that the need to build social consensus could slow progress towards the country's implementation of the Convention. Any recommendation the Committee made in that regard would be duly transmitted to the Government.

63. Officials from the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family were taking measures — by meeting with local authorities, for example — to close the gap between the metropolitan area of Seoul and the provinces in respect of women's rights. The translation requested by

Ms. Halperin-Kaddari would be provided in due course. Discussions on how to involve women in new models of economic growth were under way, in particular as the threat of climate change meant that the Republic of Korea, which had once pursued growth at all costs, would have to embrace a new economic paradigm. The Ministry and the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation were working together on commemorative projects related to the sexual enslavement of women by the Japanese military.

64. **Ms. Choi** Hye-min (Republic of Korea) said that women accounted for 31.5 per cent of the members of the country's agricultural cooperatives. They were less well represented, at 6.1 per cent, on the boards of directors of those cooperatives. Women accounted for just under two fifths of the country's entrepreneurs.

65. **Ms. Chung** Hyun-back (Republic of Korea) said that recommendations made by the Committee would inform her Government's efforts to develop policies that would contribute to the country's progress towards the elimination of discrimination against women.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.